

## IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A snare assembly for use with a snare drum, said snare assembly comprising:

a pair of spaced end members; and

a plurality of generally parallel snare strands extending between and each attached at opposite ends thereof to respective ones of said end members;

said snare strands having continuously graduated effective lengths for providing continuously graduated tension of said snare strands in a transverse direction of said snare assembly when said snare strands are elongated in an axial direction thereof,

wherein at least one of said end members is provided with a curved inner edge so that said opposite ends of said snare strands are secured to a bottom surface of said at least one of said end members substantially along said curved inner edge thereof in order to continuously graduate said effective lengths of said snare strands in the transverse direction of the snare assembly.

2. (cancelled)

3. (original) The snare assembly as defined in claim 2, wherein said curved inner edge of said at least one of said end members is convex so that said effective lengths of said snare strands in a middle portion of said snare assembly is shorter than said effective length of said snare strands at side portions thereof.

4. (original) The snare assembly as defined in claim 2, wherein said curved inner edge of said at least one of said end members is concave so that said effective lengths of said snare strands in a middle portion of said snare assembly is longer than said effective length of said snare strands at side portions thereof.

5. (original) The snare assembly as defined in claim 1, wherein said snare strands are arranged in side-by-side relationship in substantially one plane.

6. (original) The snare assembly as defined in claim 1, wherein said snare strands are made of spirally wound metal wires.

7. (original) The snare assembly as defined in claim 1, wherein each of said snare strands is permanently attached at opposite ends thereof to said respective end members by one of a soldering, brazing, welding and adhesive bonding.

8. (currently amended) The snare assembly as defined in claim 1, wherein said end members are substantially identical ~~and each of said end members is provided with a curved inner edge so that said opposite ends of said snare strands are secured to a bottom surface of said at least one of said end members substantially along said curved inner edge thereof in order to continuously graduate said effective lengths of said snare strands in the transverse direction.~~

9. (currently amended) A ~~The~~ snare assembly as defined in claim 1, for use with a snare drum, said snare assembly comprising:

a pair of spaced end members; and

a plurality of generally parallel snare strands extending between and each attached at opposite ends thereof to respective ones of said end members;

said snare strands having continuously graduated effective lengths for providing continuously graduated tension of said snare strands in a transverse direction of said snare assembly when said snare strands are elongated in an axial direction thereof,

wherein at least one of said end members is provided with an inner edge in the form of a straight line at an angle to the transverse direction of said snare assembly so that said opposite ends of said snare strands are secured to a bottom surface of said at least one of said end members substantially along said angled inner edge thereof in order to continuously graduate said effective lengths of said snare strands in the transverse direction of the snare assembly.

10. (currently amended) A ~~The~~ snare assembly as defined in claim 1, for use with a snare drum, said snare assembly comprising:

a pair of spaced end members; and

a plurality of generally parallel snare strands extending between and each attached at opposite ends thereof to respective ones of said end members;

said snare strands having continuously graduated effective lengths for providing continuously graduated tension of said snare strands in a transverse direction of said snare assembly when said snare strands are elongated in an axial direction thereof,

wherein at least one of said end members is provided with an inner edge in the form of a broken line so that said opposite ends of said snare strands are secured to a bottom surface of said at least one of said end members substantially along said inner edge thereof in order to continuously graduate said effective lengths of said snare strands in the transverse direction of the snare assembly.

11. (original) The snare assembly as defined in claim 1, wherein each of said snare strands is attached at opposite ends thereof to said respective end members by clamping.

12. (currently amended) A snare drum comprising:

a substantially cylindrical drum shell;

a lower drum head and an upper drum head oppositely secured to said drum shell;

a snare assembly mounted to said snare drum, said snare assembly including a pair of spaced end members and a plurality of generally parallel snare strands extending between and each permanently attached at opposite ends thereof to respective ones of said end members; and

a strainer mounted to said drum shell to apply tension to said snare strands of said snare assembly;

wherein said snare strands having continuously graduated effective lengths and tension in a transverse direction of said snare assembly at least one of said end members is provided with an inner edge at an angle to the transverse direction of said snare assembly so that said opposite ends of said snare strands are secured to a bottom surface of said at least one of said end members substantially along said angled inner edge thereof in order to continuously graduate said effective lengths of said snare strands in the transverse direction of the snare assembly.

13. (original) The snare drum as defined in claim 12, wherein said snare assembly is mounted adjacent said lower drum head of said snare drum.

14. (original) The snare drum as defined in claim 12, wherein said snare strands are arranged in side-by-side relationship in substantially one plane.

15. (original) The snare drum as defined in claim 12, wherein at least one of said end members is provided with a curved inner edge so that said opposite ends of said snare strands are permanently secured to a bottom surface of said at least one of said end members substantially along said curved inner edge thereof in order to continuously graduate said effective lengths of said snare strands in the transverse direction.

16. (previously presented) The snare drum as defined in claim ~~12~~ 15, wherein said curved inner edge of said at least one of said end members is convex so that said effective lengths of said snare strands in a middle portion of said snare assembly is shorter than said effective length of said snare strands at side portions thereof.

17. (previously presented) The snare drum as defined in claim ~~12~~ 15, wherein said curved inner edge of said at least one of said end members is concave so that said effective lengths of said snare strands in a middle portion of said snare assembly is longer than said effective length of said snare strands at side portions thereof.

18. (original) The snare drum as defined in claim 12, wherein at least one of said end members is provided with an inner edge in the form of a straight line at an angle to the transverse direction of said snare assembly so that said opposite ends of said snare strands are secured to a bottom surface of said at least one of said end members substantially along said angled inner edge thereof in order to continuously graduate said effective lengths of said snare strands in the transverse direction of the snare assembly.

19. (original) The snare drum as defined in claim 12, wherein at least one of said end members is provided with an inner edge in the form of a broken line so that said opposite ends of said snare strands are secured to a bottom surface of said at least one of said end members substantially along said inner edge thereof in order to continuously graduate said effective lengths of said snare strands in the transverse direction of the snare assembly.

20. (original) The snare drum as defined in claim 12, wherein said end members are substantially identical and each of said end members is provided with a curved inner edge so that said opposite ends of said snare strands are permanently secured to a bottom surface of said at least one of said end members substantially along said curved inner edge thereof in order to continuously graduate said effective lengths of said snare strands in the transverse direction.

21. (original) The snare drum as defined in claim 12, wherein said snare strands are made of spirally wound metal wires.

22. (original) The snare drum as defined in claim 12, wherein each of said snare strands is permanently attached at opposite ends thereof to said respective end members by one of a soldering, brazing, welding and adhesive bonding.

23. (original) The snare drum as defined in claim 12, wherein each of said snare strands is attached at opposite ends thereof to said respective end members by clamping.